

VZCZCXRO8749

RR RUEHAST RUEHDH RUEHHM RUEHLN RUEHMA RUEHPB RUEHPOD RUEHSL RUEHTM

RUEHTRO

DE RUEHBR #1105/01 2471016

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

R 041016Z SEP 09

FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5004

INFO RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 4491

RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO 8147

RUEHRG/AMCONSUL RECIFE 9886

RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BRASILIA 001105

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR OES/STC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SENV KSCA BR

SUBJECT: BRAZIL: EMBASSY BRASILIA'S SUGGESTED THEMES FOR UPCOMING JOINT COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

BRASILIA 00001105 001.2 OF 002

(U) THIS CABLE IS SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED AND NOT FOR INTERNET DISTRIBUTION.

¶11. (SBU) In preparation for the November ministerial-level Joint Commission Meeting on Science and Technology (JCM) Embassy Brasilia has identified three potential areas that could be used to advance U.S. Government (USG) priority interests building on the robust and on-going science and technology cooperation between the United States and Brazil. These three areas are: food security; climate change; and innovation.

AGRICULTURAL AND BIOTECHNOLOGY IN FOOD SECURITY

¶12. (SBU) Food security has become an increasingly important topic in conversations between the Embassy and the Government of Brazil (GOB). Under the bilateral Economic Partnership Dialogue (EPD), Embassy Brasilia has finalized a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that would institutionalize this trilateral cooperation in Africa and Haiti, using Mozambique as the first recipient country in a joint designed food security project. Researchers from the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA) have a long-standing, strong research relationship with the U.S. Agricultural Research Service.

¶13. (SBU) Separately from this EPD initiative, there may be scope within the scientific dialogue to launch a conversation on agricultural biotechnology, in terms of the potential for scientific cooperation and perhaps eventual joint work to the benefit of third countries, including in Africa. Both countries have made significant investments in biotechnology. Agricultural biotechnology has been a sensitive topic within the GOB, with a range of views within ministries. A conversation among those focused on biotechnology would be a helpful and productive way to re-engage on this topic, following up on a possible visit by the Secretary's Science and Technology Advisory Dr. Nina Federoff in late October.

CLIMATE RELATED SCIENCE

¶14. (SBU) Both the United States and Brazil have stated that mitigating climate change is in their national interests and that the two countries should find ways to strengthen their cooperation in this important endeavor. Science and technology cooperation is one way that both countries can contribute to a solution to this global challenge. By creating a working group or through some series of specific projects on green technology, clean energy, energy efficiency efforts, remote monitoring, and/or the study of the carbon cycle in tropical forests that would enhance our understanding of climatic changes the JCM could promote increased

cooperation in these areas. Also, progress in this area might help facilitate greater cooperation in the broader discussion of climate mitigation.

INNOVATION

¶ 15. (SBU) GOB officials continue to state that innovation is one of their highest priorities and the Ministry of External Relations (MRE) has stated that this theme must figure prominently in the JCM. Specifically, the MRE would like to see a concrete project or plan laid out through which the United States and Brazil can pursue their mutual interests in innovation. One idea is to build on the National Science Foundation's Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) programs by facilitating a joint effort between NSF, the Brazilian Innovation Agency (FINEP), and the National Council on Technological and Scientific Development (CNPq). The idea would be to build on the research that has been done on the science of innovation and attempt to implement ideas derived from this work.

¶ 16. (SBU) Continuing our bilateral discussions on innovation also provides the USG with an excellent opportunity to highlight the importance of intellectual property rights (IPR) as a pillar of innovation. While some GOB officials acknowledge the importance of IPR to innovation, the GOB writ large does not consistently draw a link between IPR and the development and commercialization of new technology and invention. The MRE's consideration of cross-retaliation on IPR (in Brazil's World Trade Organization case against the United States regarding cotton) could be perceived as a lack of commitment to the long-term value of IPR to attracting and promoting innovation as a key element of economic growth. Highlighting innovation within the JCM would give the USG another fora in which to elaborate the critical connection between IPR and innovation.

¶ 17. (SBU) Embassy Brasilia has had some preliminary discussions with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Science and

BRASILIA 00001105 002.2 OF 002

Technology (MCT) involving potential focus areas for the JCM. These discussions will continue as we seek to find common ground and solidify the planning for the upcoming event. Naturally the Embassy would appreciate input and insights from the State Department and interested U.S. agencies in this process.

KUBISKE